

The next day, on Sunday, the American Enterprise Institute's website published this account from Dr. Charles Murray.

Dr. Murray wrote:

If it hadn't been for Allison and Bill Burger [Middlebury's Vice President for Communications] keeping hold of me and the security guards pulling people off me, I would have been pushed to the ground. That much is sure. What would have happened after that I don't know, but I do recall thinking that being on the ground was a really bad idea, and I should try really hard to avoid that. Unlike Allison, I wasn't actually hurt at all. . . .

In the 23 years since "The Bell Curve" was published, I have had considerable experience with campus protests. Until last Thursday, all of the ones involving me have been as carefully scripted as kabuki: The college administration meets with the organizers of the protest, and ground rules are agreed upon. The protesters have so many minutes to do such and such. It is agreed that, after the allotted time, they will leave or desist. These negotiated agreements have always worked. At least a couple of dozen times, I have been able to give my lecture to an attentive or, at least, quiet audience despite an organized protest.

Middlebury tried to negotiate such an agreement with the protesters, but for the first time in my experience, the protesters would not accept any time limits. If this becomes the new normal, the number of colleges willing to let themselves in for an experience like Middlebury's will plunge to near zero. Academia is already largely sequestered in an ideological bubble, but at least it's translucent. That bubble will become opaque.

Worse yet, the intellectual thugs will take over many campuses. In the mid-1990s, I could count on students who had wanted to listen to start yelling at the protesters after a certain point, "Sit down and shut up. We want to hear what he has to say." That kind of pushback had an effect. It reminded the protesters that they were a minority.

I am assured [he continues] by people at Middlebury that their protesters are a minority as well, but they are a minority that has intimidated the majority. The people in the audience who wanted to hear me speak were completely cowed. That cannot be allowed to stand. A campus where a majority of students are fearful to speak openly because they know a minority will jump on them is no longer an intellectually free campus in any meaningful sense.

I suspect that most of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle may not necessarily be fans of Dr. Charles Murray. There is nothing wrong with that, but I am confident they at least would be honest enough and self-respecting enough not to condemn any scholar's work without ever having read it, like many of Middlebury's faculty members apparently did. More importantly, I am confident my Democratic colleagues would join me in denouncing the violence of the Middlebury campus protesters who sought to silence Dr. Murray. On countless occasions, I have heard my Democratic colleagues come to the Senate floor to condemn violence in all of its forms. Why would this time be any different?

We do not agree on everything, but I am confident that if Dr. Murray were invited to testify here on Capitol Hill—perhaps at a committee of the United

States Senate—my Democratic colleagues would eagerly join in an open and respectful debate that would ensue as a result of that visit. I am confident they would reject any effort to silence or to do harm to those with whom they might disagree. In fact, I am confident that if any outburst like that happened, whoever was chairing that committee and the ranking personnel associated with that committee would immediately bring the disruption to a close so an open, honest, respectful discussion could occur within that meeting.

I know tensions are high in America today, and I know what it is like to be on the losing side of a bitterly fought Presidential election as we, as Republicans, found ourselves in just a few years ago in the wake of the 2012 election cycle and in the wake of the previous Presidential election cycle before that in 2008, but that does not and cannot give anyone the license to shout down a fellow American, let alone to physically assault him just because he holds a different opinion.

Democracy and freedom—the republican form of government—depend on open, tolerant, and civil political discourse, and sustaining our democratic freedoms is, perhaps, the sole reason the government subsidizes institutions of higher education in this country.

It is embarrassing that teachers and students at an elite college like Middlebury should need reminding, but speech is not violence, and violence is not speech. Totalitarians who fail to recognize this core fact of decency and tolerance are goose-stepping into some of the darkest corners of the human heart.

If there is anything that should unite us in these polarized times, it is that the kind of violence we saw on Middlebury's campus last week must not be tolerated. That is why I commend the 44 Middlebury College professors who have signed a "Statement of Principles" on "Free Inquiry on Campus." I hope more Middlebury professors will join them. In any event, I hope all Americans will join them in standing up for free, open, honest, respectful debate.

Thank you, Mr. President.
I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES THOMAS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to acknowledge Charles Thomas, a veteran broadcast journalist and political reporter. Last week, after a career spanning four decades, Charles Thomas appeared in his final newscast at ABC 7 Chicago.

Born in Webster Groves, MO, Charles grew up in the St. Louis area and graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism. Shortly after graduation, Charles began his career as a radio reporter at KCMO in Kansas City. He has also worked in news stations in San Francisco and Philadelphia before becoming the ABC News bureau Midwest correspondent in St. Louis. In 1991, Charles was hired as a general assignment reporter at ABC 7 Chicago and later named to the coveted position of political reporter in 2009.

Since joining ABC 7's "Eyewitness News" in 1991, its newscast was and remains the most watched TV news in Chicago. On Charles's 25th anniversary at the station, he said: "I am very blessed to have worked here and like to think that my efforts have had something to do with that success." As an avid viewer, I am here to say it has. His unique perspective and keen ability to tell stories make him invaluable to any newsroom. Let me tell you, Charles asks the tough questions and holds us all accountable. As the politician often in the crosshairs, I can tell you I knew Charles was always prepared and ready to challenge any weak response. I speak for all of Chicago when I say Charles Thomas will be missed.

For more than a quarter century, Charles has covered the biggest stories in the country—the OJ Simpson Trial, Oklahoma City bombing, Rodney King trials, Great Chicago Flood, and the election of the first African-American President, to name just a few. He truly had a front row seat to history. He even joined then-Senator Barack Obama on a trip to Africa in 2006. His remarkable career has taken him to every State in America and five continents, and he leaves with no regrets. Reflecting on his years covering national, State, and local politics, he said: "Without a moment's hesitation, I can look back and say I had the best TV reporting job in America."

Charles Thomas has had an amazing career. His work earned him two Emmy awards for reporting in 1983 and 1992. Although he is retiring, Charles is not done telling stories. He plans to explore digital storytelling focusing on the African-American community, celebrating positive stories often missing in local and national broadcasts—what a noble and necessary endeavor. I am heartened that Charles will remain an inspirational voice in the community.

I want to congratulate Charles Thomas on his distinguished career and thank him for his outstanding service to the people of Chicago. I especially want to thank Charles's wife, Maria, and their three children for sharing so much of their husband and father with our community. I wish him and his family all the best in their next chapter.